



HIGHGATE



NEWS

Issue 486

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Website: <http://Highgate-rsl.org.au>

The official newsletter of the Highgate (WA) Sub-Branch of the Returned & Services League of Australia

MONTHLY LUNCHEON

21st July 2008

Venue: Gallipoli Room

Time: 1130 hrs — Fellowship, 1215 hrs — Luncheon



O B E Luncheon — No Guest Speaker

Those celebrating their 80th and beyond birthdays on this auspicious occasion are:

- 100 Harold Birch - (*Aged*)
- 90 Bob Airey, Bob Jones - (*Middle Aged*)
- 80 John Allen, Peter Anderson, Bob Arnold
Norman Marks, Don Newman, Don Rae
Theo Ricketts, Jack Suriano, Cecil Walkley - (*Youngsters*)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

June Luncheon - Dr Ken Michael AC will again be our Guest

Our Guest in June Dr Ken Michael AC was a popular speaker and he raised the question of community attitudes and the difficulty for organisations to recruit and retain new members. The Governor enjoyed the Luncheon and said he would certainly like the opportunity to visit Highgate next year.

Luncheon Numbers

We must have a more accurate count of members attending the June Luncheon; we request you signify your attendance at Luncheons by sending an email or telephoning either Bob A or Ian. If you get an answering machine just leave your name so we know you will be attending we need your RSVP by NOON on the Wednesday prior to the Luncheon for July that is Wednesday 15 July The Luncheon is Monday 20 July.

(Continued on page 2)

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Committee: 3 Aug 09

Monthly Luncheon: 17 Aug 09

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PRESENTATION OF MEDALLIONS 15 JUNE 2007

At Highgate lunch on Monday 15 June 2009 His Excellency Dr Ken Michael AC, Governor of Western Australia, presented medallions to retired Sub-Wardens. Recipients were Keith Howard, John Morriss and Peter Salmon. Les Stewart was unable to attend and was presented his medallion by President Ian at Les' home.

The silent service of the Sub-Wardens also gives the clear message to members of the public looking on, especially young people, that if those men consider it so important to turn out in the way they do, then there really must be something important on which to reflect and remember. Participation by the Sub-Wardens contributes to passing the

research was a challenge as no written records had been kept, however we were fairly confident in the list of 16 recipients in 2006, the first year of the presentation. In 2007 there were 3 and none in 2008.

The presentation item is a pewter medallion that can be displayed in their home. The medallion depicts the State War Memorial with the flags at half-mast.

Money raised by the RSL is intended primarily for the welfare of ex-service men and women. So we had to find a source of funds to pay for the medallions. We found two enthusiastic benefactors:

- Defence Service Homes Insurance donated \$1,000.
- Buckingham Pewter donated the expensive parts of the manufacturing process: the artwork and making the mould, and also the engraving of names on the medallions.



Keith Howard - John Morriss - His Excellency The Governor Dr Ken Michael AC
Peter Salmon - Phillip Skelton

Recipients are members who have retired from Sub-Warden duty and who had attended most of the wreath-laying services at the State War Memorial each year for at least ten years, or were forced by circumstances to retire prematurely. It is quite a remarkable offering of their time and effort particularly as there are typically more than 30 wreath laying services each year.

The Sub-Wardens perform an important duty that is greatly appreciated by the many different organisations, that each year conduct a wreath-laying service on a day close to the anniversary of a day with special meaning for them. The silent dignity with which the Sub-Wardens carry out their duty adds significantly to creating the atmosphere of quiet reflection and remembrance essential to each service.

message on to the next generations; the message that the sacrifice by those before them has made possible the wonderful open, free, democratic way of life we enjoy today and that we must remain eternally vigilant to keep it that way.

Highgate Sub-Branch was formed in 1947. Very soon afterwards the State Branch invited the Highgate Sub-Branch to provide an honour guard at the State War Memorial. This we have proudly done ever since. Typically there are between 8 and 16 Sub-Wardens at each service.

People giving such service should not be allowed to just fade away when they are no longer able to participate. So your Highgate Committee agreed to make a presentation of lasting value to each Sub-Warden that had attended most services each year for at least 10 years. Our

Phillip Skelton



(Continued from page 1) (President's Report)

July is our 80, 90 and 100 Birthday Luncheon

It is great to see our birthday boys will be turning up for the Luncheon in July and the format will be similar to past years.

RSL State Congress 2009

Congress was held over the weekend of 27/28 June. Highgate was well represented and dealt with business as it arose from the agenda. Next year the congress will move to late October

Cheers
Ian



SUB WARDENS DUTIES

Wreath Laying Services currently scheduled at the State War Memorial Kings Park

Sunday	5 July 2009	0930 hrs for 1000 hrs - Z Special Unit
Sunday	19 July 2009	0945 hrs for 1000 hrs - Association of the RYA Combatants
Sunday	26 July 2009	1145 hrs for 1200 hrs - Cypriot Community of WA
Monday	27 July 2009	1000 hrs for 1030 hrs - Korea and South East Asia Veterans Association (Warden and Deputy Warden only)
Sunday	2 August 2009	1200 hrs for 1230 hrs - Association of Macedonian Organisations of WA

LESSER KNOWN SERVICES AT THE STATE WAR MEMORIAL

**Association of the Royal Yugoslav Army and Movement of Serbian & Chetniks Combatants
"Draza Mihailovic" WA**

As they do at this time each year the Association of the RYA Combatants will hold a Remembrance Service at the State War Memorial on 9 July 2009. We are familiar with the names of most organisations that hold such services and quite often know the reason for selection of the date of their service, because most of them are unit or service associations to which RSL members belong. The Association of the RYA Combatants is one of a number of organisations which may not be so well known to members. Our curiosity may be at least partly satisfied by the following speech delivered at the end of the 23 July 2006 service by Mr Tom Mihailovic.

Phillip Skelton

"We are gathered here today to honour our Serbian soldiers who lost their lives in the period 1941 – 1945 during the Second World War. Also the guerrilla fighters in occupied Yugoslavia who fought against the Nazi German Army as well as other enemy forces in Yugoslavia; comprising Italians, Bulgarians, Hungarians, Albanians, Croatia Ustashi and Yugoslav Communists.

They fought bravely in the Royal

Yugoslav Army, under the command of the late General Draza Mihailovic – the first guerrilla resistance leader in occupied Europe. So great was their effort in fighting from 1941 to 1943, in helping the British Army in Africa, by destroying the German's supply through Yugoslavia and saving hundreds of American pilots during the war, that General Draza Mihailovic was decorated by British, French, Polish and American Governments.

The President of the United States, Harry Truman, awarded him the Legion of Merit. The following is the citation: 'General Dragoljub Mihailovic distinguished himself in an outstanding manner as Commander-in-Chief of the Yugoslavian Army Forces and later as Minister of War by organising and leading important resistance forces against the enemy which occupied Yugoslavia from December 1941 to December 1944. Through the undaunted efforts of his troops, many United States airmen were rescued and returned safely to friendly control. General Mihailovic and his forces, although lacking adequate supplies, and fighting under extreme hardship, contributed materially to the Allied cause, and were

instrumental in obtaining a final Allied victory.'

General Mihailovic was killed by the Communist Government in Yugoslavia after the war on 17 July 1946. The whereabouts of his remains still are unknown today. In his own homeland for which he fought, his name was forbidden to be spoken for over 50 years, until the Communist Government was toppled a few years ago. Our fellow countrymen in our homeland are now able to commemorate in a similar manner as we have done in Australia over the years.

Today we also pay tribute to those Serbian soldiers who gave their lives in World War I, as well as those who sacrificed their lives from the Battle of Kosovo in 1389 right up to these present days.

"It is with pride that we remember that Australian and Serbian soldiers fought together against common enemies in both World Wars.

On behalf of the Serbian people; we are grateful to the Sub-Wardens for your contribution and presence at today's solemn ceremony."

NOTIFICATION OF LUNCHEON ATTENDANCE

It is important that we know who is attending our monthly lunches as we need to advise the kitchen beforehand to ensure that we keep the cost down. Please advise Bob A or Ian of your intentions by midday on the **Wednesday preceding the lunch**. For the next luncheon that is 15 Jul. The charge for lunch is \$25.00. Bob's contact details are arnold@wn.com.au or 9448 2757 and Ian's are mojen@bigpond.net.au or 9572 2632.



FRIDAY MORNING AT THE PENTAGON

(With thanks to Bob Mercer)

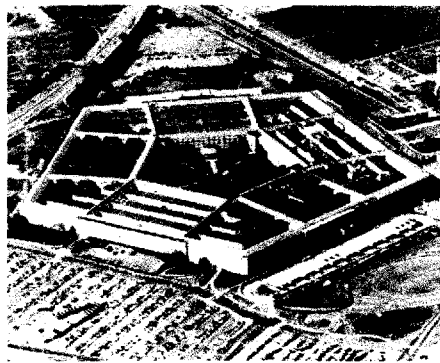
Over the last 12 months, 1,042 soldiers, Marines, sailors and Air Force personnel have given their lives in the terrible duty that is war. Thousands more have come home on stretchers, horribly wounded and facing months or years in military hospitals.

This week, I'm turning my space over to a good friend and former roommate, Army Lt. Col. Robert Bateman, who recently completed a yearlong tour of duty in Iraq and is now back at the Pentagon. Here's Lt. Col. Bateman's account of a little-known ceremony that fills the halls of the Army corridor of the Pentagon with cheers, applause and many tears every Friday morning. It first appeared on May 17 on the Weblog of media critic and pundit Eric Alterman at the Media Matters for America Website.

"It is 110 yards from the "E" ring to the "A" ring of the Pentagon. This section of the Pentagon is newly renovated; the floors shine, the hallway is broad, and the lighting is bright. At this instant the entire length of the corridor is packed with officers, a few sergeants and some civilians, all crammed tightly three and four deep against the walls. There are thousands here. This hallway, more than any other, is the 'Army' hallway. The G3 offices line one side, G2 the other, G8 is around the corner. All Army. Moderate conversations flow in a low buzz. Friends, who may not have seen each other for a few weeks, or a few years, spot each other, cross the way and renew.

Everyone shifts to ensure an open path remains down the centre. The air conditioning system was not designed for this press of bodies in this area. The temperature is rising already. Nobody cares.

10:36 hours: The clapping starts at the E-Ring. That is the outer most of the five rings of the Pentagon and it is closest to the entrance to the



building. This clapping is low, sustained, and hearty. It is applause with a deep emotion behind it as it moves forward in a wave down the length of the hallway.

A steady rolling wave of sound it is, moving at the pace of the soldier in the wheelchair who marks the forward edge with his presence. He is the first. He is missing the greater part of one leg, and some of his wounds are still suppurating. By his age, I expect that he is a private, or perhaps a private first class.

Captains, majors, lieutenant colonels and colonels meet his gaze and nod as they applaud, soldier to soldier.

Three years ago when I described one of these events, those lining the hallways were somewhat different. The applause a little wilder, perhaps in private guilt for not having shared in the burden. Yet now almost everyone lining the hallway is, like the man in the wheelchair, also a combat veteran. This steadies the applause, but I think deepens the sentiment. We have all been there now. The soldier's chair is pushed by, I believe, a full colonel. Behind him, and stretching the length from Rings E to A, come more of his peers, each private, corporal, or sergeant assisted as need be by a field grade officer.

11:00 hours: Twenty-four minutes of steady applause. My hands hurt, and I laugh to myself at how stupid that sounds in my own head. My hands hurt. Please! Shut up and clap. For twenty-

four minutes, soldier after soldier has come down this hallway - 20, 25, 30. Fifty-three legs come with them, and perhaps only 52 hands or arms, but down this hall came 30 solid hearts.

They pass down this corridor of officers and applause, and then meet for a private lunch, at which they are the guests of honour, hosted by the generals. Some are wheeled along. Some insist upon getting out of their chairs, to march as best they can with their chin held up, down this hallway, through this most unique audience. Some are catching handshakes and smiling like a politician at a Fourth of July parade. More than a couple of them seem amazed and are smiling shyly.

There are families with them as well: the 18-year-old war-bride pushing her 19-year-old husband's wheelchair and not quite understanding why her husband is so affected by this, the boy she grew up with, now a man, who had never shed a tear is crying; the older immigrant Latino parents who have, more than their wounded mid-20s son, an appreciation for the emotion given on their son's behalf. No man in that hallway, walking or clapping, is ashamed by the silent tears on more than a few cheeks. An Airborne Ranger wipes his eyes only to better see. A couple of the officers in this crowd have themselves been a part of this parade in the past.

These are our men, broken in body they may be, but they are ours and we welcome them home. This parade has gone on, every single Friday, all year long, for more than four years.

Did you know that? The media hasn't yet told the story. And probably never will.

Joseph L Galloway
McClatchy Newspapers



LAST POST

Max Shean DSO

Lest We Forget